

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SINGAP 00218 161202Z
ACTION H-03

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FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9388

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SINGAPORE 0218

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OREP (CODEL HOWARD)
SUBJECT: CODEL HOWARD VISIT TO SINGAPORE

REF: STATE 303653

1. CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION LED BY REPRESENTATIVE JAMES J. HOWARD VISITED SINGAPORE JANUARY 11-13 TO OBSERVE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION POLICIES. DELEGATION CONSISTED OF THREE MEMBERS AND TWO STAFF OF HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORTATION.

2. MORNING OF JANUARY 12, CODEL MET WITH SIM KEE BOON, PERMANENT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS, AND OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR SINGAPORE'S TRAFFIC CONTROL SYSTEM AND PROPOSED MASS RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM. SINGAPORE OFFICIALS DISCUSSED PROS AND CONS OF BUILDING SUBWAY HERE (FINAL DECISION HAS NOT YET BEEN TAKEN), BUT MAJOR PORTION OF 75-MINUTE SESSION WAS DEVOTED TO OPERATION OF SINGAPORE'S AREA LICENSING SCHEME, WHICH RESTRICTS MORNING TRAFFIC INTO CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT, AND ASSOCIATED CAR POOL, PARKING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION POLICIES. FOLLOWING THE BRIEFING, CODEL HELD SMALL PRESS CONFERENCE FOR MEMBERS OF LOCAL MEDIA.

3. MORNING OF JANUARY 13, CODEL MET WITH LIM LEONG GEOK, SECRETARY, ROAD TRANSPORTATION ACTION COMMITTEE, TO OBSERVE
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OPERATION OF RESTRICTED ZONE. CODEL WATCHED TRAFFIC FLOW AT ONE MAJOR ENTRY POINT TO RESTRICTED ZONE IMMEDIATELY BEFORE AND AFTER IMPOSITION OF CONTROLS AT 7:30 A.M. CODEL THEN TOURED THE PERIMETER OF RESTRICTED ZONE, OBSERVING FRINGE CAR PARKS, BYPASS ROADS AND SALES BOOTHS FOR DAILY AREA LICENSES.

4. LATER THAT MORNING CODEL ATTENDED EMBASSY BRIEFING BY AMBASSADOR

AND STAFF AND THEN VISITED OFFICES OF SINGAPORE BUS SERVICE
FOR BRIEFING AND OBSERVATION OF CITY'S MAJOR BUS OPERATOR.
BUS COMPANY HOSTED LUNCH FOR CODEL FOLLOWING THE BRIEFING.

5. AFTERNOON OF JANUARY 13, EMBASSY DEFENSE ATTACHE
OFFICE HOSTED CODEL ON WATERBORNE TOUR OF SINGAPORE'S
HARBOR. DELEGATION DEPARTED SINGAPORE EVENING OF JANUARY 13.

6. EMBASSY COMMENT: VISIT WENT OFF VERY WELL DESPITE ABNORMALLY
LARGE NUMBER OF U.S. OFFICIAL VISITORS WHO DESCENDED ON SIN-
GAPORE DURING THE WEEK. CONGRESSMAN HOWARD COMMENTED THAT SINGAPORE
OFFICIALS WERE ABLE TO REBUT ALMOST ALL OBJECTIONS WHICH CODEL
FELT WOULD PRECLUDE ANY SUCH TRAFFIC RESTRICTION SYSTEM IN THE
UNITED STATES. PRESS GAVE FAVORABLE MODERATE COVERAGE TO THE
VISIT.
HOLDRIDGE

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